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UNCLAS KATHMANDU 000643

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

DEPT FOR SA/INS  
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PLEASE PASS TO USAID/ANE

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: NEPAL: KING ADDRESSES FAR-WEST

REF: KATHMANDU 18

[11.](#) (U) Summary: On April 4, King Gyanendra addressed thousands at a civic reception in Nepal's far-west. The King's brief remarks highlighted the importance of the monarchy as an institution, the need for good governance to achieve development, and his commitment to representative multiparty democracy. The King asked for the political parties to support the peace talks and the interim cabinet. The King's themes undercut Maoist arguments for radical constitutional change. End summary.

[12.](#) (U) On April 4, King Gyanendra addressed thousands at a civic reception in Dhangadhi in Nepal's far-west. This is the second public event since the King's coronation; the first was reported reftel. The King's brief remarks highlighted the importance of the monarchy as an institution, the need for good governance to achieve development, and his commitment to representative multiparty democracy. In a pointed statement to political parties and the Maoists, he called on them to "contribute in earnest to make the peace process a success" and not to stand against the popular will of the Nepali people for peace. In statements directed at the international community, the King requested the political parties to support the interim cabinet, arguing that "the international community has begun to place their faith in Nepal and its governance due to the improvement in the country's general condition." Unlike the monarch's first address, where political parties criticized the expense and tried to paint the civic program as an attempt to sideline them, there was little positive or negative publicity surrounding the latest speech.

[13.](#) (SBU) Comment: The King's speech, the second in a series of carefully staged "public outreach" events, was crafted to resonate with domestic audiences weary of the long insurgency and grateful for the respite provided by the cease-fire. By calling on the Maoists and the political parties together to "contribute to peace," the King signaled that he considers each equally important--and potentially obstructive--to progress towards peace. The speech also co-opted many of the Maoist themes for a "new Nepal" and "true democracy," placing them in a framework that does not require radical change of the constitution, as envisaged by the Maoists.

MALINOWSKI